

Cast Maintenance and Care

Why is Cast Care Important?

Proper cast care is essential to ensure **healing, prevent skin irritation, and avoid complications** like infections, pressure sores, or cast damage. Follow these guidelines to protect your cast and promote a smooth recovery.

General Cast Care Tips

- ✓ **Keep your cast dry** - Moisture weakens the cast and can irritate the skin.
- ✓ **Elevate your limb** above heart level for the first 48 hours to reduce swelling.
- ✓ **Move your fingers or toes** frequently to improve circulation.
- ✓ **Use a sling (if applicable)** to support an arm cast and reduce fatigue.
- ✓ **Check for tightness** - If the cast feels too tight or too loose, notify your doctor.

Keeping Your Cast Dry

- **Use a plastic cover** or waterproof sleeve when showering, but do NOT trust that it will be waterproof! Consider getting a cast care bag on Amazon or use an umbrella bag.
- **Do NOT submerge your cast in water** (bathing, swimming).
- **If the cast gets slightly damp**, dry it with a cool hairdryer.
- **If the cast gets wet inside**, contact your doctor as it may need to be replaced.

What to Avoid

Do NOT stick objects inside the cast (e.g., pens, coat hangers) to scratch an itch-this can cause sores or infections.

Do NOT trim, cut, or modify the cast - If it's uncomfortable, see your doctor.

Do NOT apply powders or lotions inside the cast - This can trap moisture and cause skin irritation.

Do NOT bear weight on a walking cast unless cleared by your doctor.

Signs You Should Call Your Doctor

Severe pain or burning inside the cast.

Swelling, numbness, or tingling in fingers or toes that doesn't improve with elevation.

Blue, pale, or cold fingers/toes - May indicate poor circulation.

Foul smell or drainage coming from the cast - Could signal infection.

Cracked, broken, or loose cast - May not provide proper support.

Cast Removal

- **NEVER remove the cast yourself** - It must be cut off by a doctor using special

tools.

- **After cast removal, skin may be dry or scaly** - Wash gently with soap and water and apply lotion.
- **Muscles may feel weak or stiff** - Follow any prescribed physical therapy or exercises to regain strength.

Bottom Line

- ✓ **Keep your cast dry and clean**
- ✓ **Do NOT stick anything inside the cast**
- ✓ **Watch for signs of poor circulation or infection**
- ✓ **Keep extremity elevated to reduce pain and swelling**
- ✓ **Call your doctor if you have concerns**

Click here for more orthopedic patient information.

Contact a Key West orthopedic clinic or reach out to Dr. Jason Pirozzolo.